

Making the Most of Your Limited Time



VA knows that you have a limited amount of time as a Family Caregiver – especially when it comes to doing something nice for yourself or taking care of those little things that seem to pile up. Taking care of a Veteran often means you forget or don't have time for the simple things in your own life.

Try the suggestions below to take advantage of the few minutes you do have – whether you want to give yourself a break or check an item off your to do list.

Have two free minutes? Try these ideas:

Taking Care of You

- Brush your teeth.
- Comb your hair.
- Savor a piece of chocolate.
- Wash your face.
- Light a candle.
- Water your garden or indoor plants.
- Spend time with your pet.
- Say hello to your neighbor.
- Listen to your favorite song.
- Stretch to relieve the tension in your body.
- Sign up for a joke of the day e-mail.
- Put on your makeup or lotion.
- Take your regular medication and daily vitamins.
- Fluff the pillows on your couch.
- Put on perfume or cologne.
- Shave.
- Open the blinds in your house.
- Floss.
- Read your horoscope.
- Refill your candy dispenser.
- Count your blessings.

Tackling the To Do List

- Clean your kitchen sink.
- Change a light bulb.
- Start a load of laundry.
- Load/unload the dishwasher.
- Sign your child's field trip permission slip.
- Check your mailbox.

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Have five free minutes? Try these ideas:

Taking Care of You

Take a shower.

Write someone a card.

Enjoy a cup of tea outside.

Eat a healthy snack.

Check the news online.

Log in to your favorite social media site.

Check in with your online support group.

Pluck your eyebrows.

Call a friend.

Look at old pictures.

Watch a funny YouTube video.

Make microwave popcorn.

Plan a special meal for you and a friend.

Hold or rock a baby.

Plan a meal with your favorite comfort foods.

Buy something you want online.

Color a picture.

Replace the potpourri in your house.

Tackling the To Do List

Update your address book.

Make your grocery list.

Fold laundry.

Take out the trash.

Sweep your floor.

Clean the toilet.

Check your bank account.

Dust your furniture.

Vacuum.

Shake out your rugs.

Change the sheets on your bed.

Sort through your desk.

Organize your silverware drawer.

Have 30 free minutes? Try these ideas:

Taking Care of You

Take a bubble bath.
Catch up on e-mail.
Read a book.
Play a board game.
Take a walk.
Walk or brush your pet.
Write in your journal.
Work on your scrapbook.
Sit in a hot tub.
Pamper yourself.
Have your favorite restaurant deliver a meal.
Visit a neighbor or friend.
Bake some cookies.
Prepare and eat a healthy meal.
Go to the library or visit the bookstore.
Look at new eBooks.
Buy your favorite treat.
Spend time with your family.
Do a crossword or Sudoku puzzle.
Write a poem.
Visit VA's Caregiver Support website.
Whiten your teeth.
Go out for lunch.
Roller-skate or rollerblade around your neighborhood.
Crochet or knit.
Hula hoop.
Play your game system.
Watch a favorite TV show, or something from your DVR.
Take a cat nap.
Go to a yard sale in your neighborhood.
Attend a function at your church, synagogue, spiritual house or community center.
Do something that fulfills your spirituality.

Tackling the To Do List

Pay your bills.
Get your car serviced.
Wash your car/clean inside of your car.
Pull weeds in your flowerbed.
Put gas in your car.
Change your air filters.
Check your tires.
Shred old bills you no longer need.
Ask a friend to help you flip your mattress.

Taking a few minutes to stay focused and fully charged is one of the most important things you can do for you and for the Veteran you care for. Caregiving can take a lot out of you. Remember to put some of that back in.